

Washington D.C.- Congressman Steve King (R-IA), Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law, issued the following statement after reading remarks made by Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to the Capitol Hill newspaper, Politico. In his remarks, Secretary Vilsack claimed that food prices would be “three, four or five times more” were it not for the presence of illegal immigrants working in rural America. Vilsack then used this claim as evidence to support his call for amnesty via “comprehensive immigration reform.”

“Today, Secretary Vilsack made an unfounded claim that without illegal labor, Americans would be spending ‘a lot more –three, four or five times more—for food.’ This is blatantly false. Data from the Secretary’s own Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that labor costs only represent six-percent of the price consumers pay for fresh fruit and vegetables. Based on a 2007 report by the Center for Immigration Studies, if there was a 40-percent increase in farm wages, this would only raise consumer spending on fresh fruit and vegetables by \$8 a year.”

“The Obama Administration and Secretary Vilsack have failed to consider the cost of granting comprehensive amnesty to 12-20 million illegal aliens currently living in the United States. Comprehensive amnesty will further devastate our economy by sacrificing more American jobs and opening up our 71 different welfare programs to those that have come here illegally. This would place a larger tax

burden on the already strained wallets of Americans. Now is the time to enforce the Rule of Law, not grant comprehensive amnesty.”

#